



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS

Re: Request for Review of the Decision of the Universal Service Administrator by Information Technology Department, State of North Dakota, Bismarck, North Dakota, DA 02-956

Hundreds of schools and libraries successfully filed electronic applications for E-Rate discounts within the filing window, but failed to mail a signed certification until after the window had closed. As a result, these schools and libraries -- including many rural and poor schools in North Dakota, Puerto Rico, and numerous other places -- were denied discounts to connect their classrooms and libraries to the Internet. I am troubled when so many deserving schools are denied funding, particularly as in this case, when the rules were changed and are being applied for the first time. Given these facts, I would have supported granting a one-time waiver to provide funding to these schools and libraries.

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